

Special Cyprus Coordinator Thomas Weston, and U.S. Ambassador to Cyprus Donald Bandler continued to provide diplomatic support to the United Nations-sponsored proximity talks in July and early August in Geneva and again in September in New York. The United Nations reports that this process has taken a “qualitative step forward” and was scheduled to resume in Geneva on November 1.

Sincerely,

William J. Clinton

NOTE: Identical letters were sent to J. Dennis Hastert, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Jesse Helms, chairman, Senate Committee on Foreign Relations.

**Statement on Signing the Indian
Land Consolidation Act
Amendments of 2000**

November 7, 2000

Today I am pleased to sign into law S. 1586, the “Indian Land Consolidation Act Amendments of 2000.” This Act is critical to the economic viability of individually owned Indian lands and the success of the Department of the Interior’s ongoing efforts to implement the American Indian Trust Fund Management Reform Act of 1994. It will help reduce the administrative and financial burden arising from the fractionated ownership of Indian lands.

The Act puts provisions in place for probate reform and establishing uniform rules for the descent and distribution of interests in allotted lands. It also contains provisions for the consolidation of fractional interests, as well as preventing lands from being taken out of trust when inherited by non-Indians. In addition, it will enhance opportunities for economic development by specifying the minimum percentage of owners of fractional interests that must consent to leasing agreements. Finally, it extends the Secretary’s authority to acquire fractional interests, of 2 percent or less, for tribal consolidation, through the pilot project that my Administration and the Congress initiated in 1999. Since many Native Americans die without wills, it also authorizes estate planning assistance.

The Act results from our close consultation and collaboration with the Congress, the tribes, and the Indian landowners that began in 1994 and has been one of my Administration’s top priorities in Indian trust fund management reform. Today’s action will help bring Indian land ownership, management, and development into the 21st century.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
November 7, 2000.

NOTE: S. 1586, approved November 7, was assigned Public Law No. 106–462.

**Proclamation 7371—National
Adoption Month, 2000**

November 7, 2000

*By the President of the United States
of America*

A Proclamation

Families are the cornerstone of our Nation. Yet, today, tens of thousands of America’s children are living within our child welfare system, without the sustained love and care of permanent families. For many of these children, often shuttled from one living situation to another, adoption opens the door to loving parents and permanent homes, where they can put down roots and learn what it means to be part of a safe, stable family. Adoption gives children who have been orphaned, abandoned, or abused a precious second chance at happiness; a chance to love and be loved and to reach their full potential in a secure, supportive environment.

While foster care offers children a safe temporary haven, adoption allows children to have the permanent homes they deserve. That is why increasing the chances of adoption for children in the foster care system has been one of my Administration’s chief goals. Over the last 8 years, we have worked with the Congress to craft legislation that makes it easier, faster, and more affordable for parents to adopt children. Adoptive parents—like all new parents—can now take time off to care for their newly adopted children without fear of losing their jobs. We

have ensured health coverage for adopted children with special needs, barred discrimination and delays of adoptions on the basis of race or ethnicity, provided tax cuts to families adopting children, and offered States financial incentives to move children more rapidly from foster care into the permanent homes of loving families.

We are beginning to see dramatic results from these efforts. Last year alone, 46,000 foster children were adopted—an increase of nearly 65 percent since 1996. All 50 States, as well as the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, have succeeded in increasing the number of children adopted from their child welfare systems. This puts us well on the way to meeting my goal of doubling the annual number of adoptions from 28,000 in 1996 to 56,000 in 2002.

Despite our efforts, nearly 20,000 18-year-olds still leave foster care each year without the emotional, social, and financial support that adoptive families provide. To help them make the challenging transition to successful, independent adulthood, I signed the Foster Care Independence Act last year. This legislation provides young people who are growing too old for the foster care system with better educational opportunities and access to health care, training, housing assistance, counseling, and other services.

As we observe National Adoption Month, we should take pride in our progress, but realize that there is more work to be done. Let us recommit ourselves to giving our Nation's most vulnerable children what every child deserves and needs—a safe, stable home and a loving family. And let us also give thanks for the many generous and compassionate families who, through adoption, have opened their hearts and homes and changed a child's life forever.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim November 2000 as National Adoption Month. I urge all Americans to observe this month with appropriate programs and activities to honor adoptive families and to participate in efforts to find permanent, loving homes for waiting children.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of November, in the year of our Lord two thousand, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-fifth.

William J. Clinton

[Filed with the Office of the Federal Register, 8:45 a.m., November 9, 2000]

NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on November 13.

Remarks on Returning from Chappaqua, New York, and an Exchange With Reporters

November 8, 2000

2000 Presidential Election

The President. Good afternoon. Well, if ever there was a doubt about the importance of exercising democracy's most fundamental right, the right to vote, yesterday put it to rest. No American will ever be able to seriously say again, "My vote doesn't count."

The American people have now spoken, but it's going to take a little while to determine exactly what they said. The process for that is in motion, and the rest of us will have to let it play out.

I want to congratulate Vice President Gore and Governor Bush on a vigorous, hard-fought, truly remarkable campaign.

Thank you very much.

Conversation With Vice President Gore

Q. Mr. President, did you advise the Vice President to rescind his concession last night?

The President. No, sir. I didn't talk to him about it at all, one way or the other. I talked to him afterward.

We had a great talk later, when the situation was as it is now, and we were laughing. We had a—he was in a good humor. He talked—we talked about the unpredictability of life and how he'd done all he could, and he was pleased that he was ahead in the popular vote at the time. I don't know what the latest totals are. And we had a very good talk. And he congratulated Hillary, and they had a nice little visit.